

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A stent comprising,
first and second terminal ends spaced apart from each other, at least one of the first and second terminal ends comprising a retention ring having an expanded ring state and a collapsed ring state, and

a wall, disposed between the first and second terminal ends, and including an inner surface and an outer surface, the inner surface defining a lumen extending between the first and second terminal ends, and the outer surface having a substantially smooth portion, the wall having,

a first outside cross-sectional diameter at the first terminal end, a second outside cross-sectional diameter at the second terminal end, at least one intermediate outside cross-sectional diameter at an intermediate location between the first and second terminal ends, each of the first and second outside cross-sectional diameters is greater than the intermediate outside cross sectional diameter and the outer surface of the wall tapers down from each of the first and second terminal ends to the at least one intermediate location, and

an expanded state and a collapsed state, the wall being adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed state to the expanded state,

wherein the retention ring is adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed ring state to the expanded ring state and, in the expanded ring state, the retention ring extends axially from the wall of the stent.

2. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the first terminal end of the stent is adapted for residing at a bladder end of a prostatic urethra of a patient and the second terminal end of the stent is adapted for residing at an external sphincter end of the prostatic urethra.

3. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the substantially smooth portion of the outer surface of the wall is adapted to inhibit tissue-in-growth.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Currently amended) A stent according to claim [4] 1 wherein the retention ring includes an annular elastic core.
6. (Original) A stent according to claim 5 wherein the annular elastic core includes a nickel-titanium alloy.
7. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the first terminal end includes a retention ring, having an expanded ring state and a collapsed ring state, and being adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed ring state to the expanded ring state to facilitate retention of the retention ring within the bladder of the patient, and in the expanded ring state, the retention ring extending axially from the wall of the stent.
8. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the second terminal includes a retention ring, having an expanded ring state and a collapsed ring state, and being adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed ring state to the expanded ring state to inhibit the retention ring from passing through an external sphincter of the prostatic urethra of the patient, and in the expanded ring state, the retention ring extending axially from the wall of the stent.
9. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 1 wherein
the first terminal end includes a first retention ring having a first expanded ring state and a first collapsed ring state and being adapted to spontaneously revert from the first collapsed ring state to the first expanded ring state to facilitate retention of the first retention ring within the bladder of the patient, the first retention ring extending axially from the wall of the stent in the first expanded ring state, and wherein
the second terminal end includes a second retention ring having a second expanded ring state and a second collapsed ring state and being adapted to spontaneously revert from the second collapsed ring state to the second expanded ring state to inhibit the second retention ring from passing through the external sphincter of the prostatic urethra of the patient,

the second retention ring extending axially from the wall of the stent in the second expanded ring state.

10. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the wall further comprises at least one through aperture extending between the inner surface and the outer surface for providing fluid communication between the inner surface and the outer surface.

11. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the first outside cross-sectional diameter is greater than the second outside cross-sectional diameter.

12. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the second outside cross-sectional diameter is greater than the first outside cross-sectional diameter.

13. (Original) A stent according to claim 1, wherein the first terminal end comprises a domed segment having inner and outer surfaces and extending axially from the wall of the stent and adapted for facilitating insertion of the stent into the patient.

14. (Original) A stent according to claim 13 wherein the domed segment further comprises at least one through aperture extending radially between the inner and outer surfaces of the domed segment to provide fluid communication between the inner and outer surfaces of the domed segment.

15. (Original) A stent according to claim 14 wherein the domed segment further comprises an axially extending protuberance adapted for facilitating insertion of the stent into a patient.

16. (Original) A stent according to claim 15 wherein the axially extending protuberance has a through aperture sized to accommodate a guide wire.

17. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the wall of the stent includes a radio-opaque material.

18. (Original) A stent according to claim 1 wherein the wall comprises a coating.

38. (Currently amended) A stent comprising,
first and second terminal ends spaced apart from each other, at least one of the first and second terminal ends comprising a retention ring having an expanded ring state and a collapsed ring state, and

a wall, disposed between the first and second terminal ends, and including an inner surface and an outer surface, the inner surface defining a lumen extending between the first and second terminal ends, and the outer surface having a substantially smooth portion, the wall having,

a first outside cross-sectional diameter at the first terminal end;

a second outside cross-sectional diameter at the second terminal end,

at least one intermediate outside cross-sectional diameter at an intermediate location between the first and second terminal ends,

wherein at least one each of the first and second outside cross-sectional diameters is greater than the intermediate outside cross sectional diameter and the outer surface of the wall tapers down from each of the first and second terminal ends to the at least one intermediate location; and

wherein, in the expanded ring state, the retention ring extends axially from the wall of the stent, and

an expanded state and a collapsed state, the wall being adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed state to the expanded state.

39. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the first terminal end of the stent is adapted for residing at a bladder end of a prostatic urethra of a patient and the second terminal end of the stent is adapted for residing at an external sphincter end of the prostatic urethra.

40. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the substantially smooth portion of the outer surface of the wall is adapted to inhibit tissue-in-growth.

41. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the retention ring is adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed ring state to the expanded ring state.

42. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 41 wherein the retention ring includes an annular elastic core.

43. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 42 wherein the annular elastic core includes a nickel-titanium alloy.

44. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the first terminal end includes the retention ring adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed ring state to the expanded ring state to facilitate retention of the retention ring within the bladder of the patient.
45. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the second terminal includes the retention ring adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed ring state to the expanded ring state to inhibit the retention ring from passing through an external sphincter of the prostatic urethra of the patient.
46. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the wall further comprises at least one through aperture extending between the inner surface and the outer surface for providing fluid communication between the inner surface and the outer surface.
47. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the first outside cross-sectional diameter is greater than the second outside cross-sectional diameter.
48. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the second outside cross-sectional diameter is greater than the first outside cross-sectional diameter.
49. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the wall of the stent includes a radio-opaque material.
50. (Previously presented) A stent according to claim 38 wherein the wall comprises a coating.
51. (Currently amended) A stent comprising,
a first terminal end including a first retention ring, the first retention ring having a first expanded ring state and a first collapsed ring state and being adapted to spontaneously revert from the first collapsed ring state to the first expanded ring state to facilitate retention of the first retention ring within the bladder of the patient, ~~the first retention ring extending axially from the wall of the stent in the first expanded ring state;~~
a second terminal end spaced apart from the first terminal end and including a second retention ring, the second retention ring having a second expanded second ring state and a second collapsed ring state and being adapted to spontaneously revert from the second collapsed ring

state to the second expanded ring state to inhibit the second retention ring from passing through the external sphincter of the prostatic urethra of the patient, ~~the second retention ring extending axially from the wall of the stent in the second expanded ring state~~; and

a wall, disposed between the first and second terminal ends, and including an inner surface and an outer surface, the inner surface defining a lumen extending between the first and second terminal ends, and the outer surface having a substantially smooth portion, the wall having,

a first outside cross-sectional diameter at the first terminal end;
a second outside cross-sectional diameter at the second terminal end,
at least one intermediate outside cross-sectional diameter at an intermediate location between the first and second terminal ends,

wherein ~~at least one each~~ of the first and second outside cross-sectional diameters is greater than the intermediate outside cross sectional diameter ~~and the outer surface of the wall tapers down from each of the first and second terminal ends to the at least one intermediate location~~, and

an expanded state and a collapsed state, the wall being adapted to spontaneously revert from the collapsed state to the expanded state,

wherein, in the first expanded ring state, the first retention ring extends axially from the wall of the stent and, in the second expanded ring state, the second retention ring extends axially from the wall of the stent.